for Development of the Entertainment Sector has been set up. The Committee had given its first set of recommendations which, including a recommendation to fix a ceiling of 60% on entertainment tax, rates. An anti-piracy training programme was also organized for police officers based on the recommendations of the Committee, which is expected to be the precursor of many such training programmes.

In its recent meeting the Committee has made recommendations, mainly relating to a further education in entertainment tax rates to 45%, appointment of a nodal officer in each State for assisting in anti-piracy matters and facilitating a single point clearance by State Governments for foreign film crews shooting in India. The second set of recommendations of the Committee have also been persuasively circulated to State Governments.

In order to bring about a receptive investment regime in the entertainment sector, within India, a Committee has recently been setup to suggest a strategy to facilitate the flow of venture capital into the sector.

The Government had also constituted a Committee to make recommendations for Radio Broadcasting.

(c) and (d) The recommendations submitted to the Government, by the Committee headed by Dr. Amit Mitra, include, *inter alia,* the issue of foreign direct investment in private FM radio. These recommendations are available on the Ministry's website *http./www.mib.nic.in.*

Introduction of DD News Channel

2105. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have introduced the DD News Channel;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what is the viewing rate of the DD News Channel *vis-a-vis* the other private News Channels; and

(d) the steps being taken to improve the viewership of the DD News Channel?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b)

Prasar Bharati has informed that a 24 hours News Channel was launched on 3rd November, 2003 which provides free to air round the clock news, which is objective and unbiased, to the public so as to inform and educate them. The chennel is available in both the terrestrial and satellite mode. It is the only terrestrial news channel in the country.

(c) Prasar Bharati has informed that the DD News Channel is the most popular news channel in all homes and the second most watched news channel in cable and satellite homes ahead of many established news channels.

(d) Prasar Bharati has informed that the steps taken to improve the popularity of this channel include hiring of popular anchors from open market, new set and new montage along with new signature tune for news bulletins, hourly news templates, running news scroll, giving time slots to reputed outside Producers for Sponsored programmes and also hiring the services of well known media persons for anchoring in-house production.

Rights for Cricket and Tennis Events

2106. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the rights for cricket and tennis events were acquired without any estimation or justification;

(b) whether it led to wide fluctuations in the costs of rights fee per match;

(c) whether DD failed to develop a rational basis for calculation of opportunity cost; and

(d) if so, the details thereof including the estimates per event?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (d) The .Prasar Bharati has informed that before bidding for acquiring telecast rights for any sporting event, they take into account interest of the general public in a particular sporting event, potential for revenue generation from the event *vis-a-vis* likely loss of revenue from non-telecast of normal programmes during that time. The broadcast rights are acquired